









# DUBLIN DAYS





# DUBLIN DAYS

BY

L. A. G. STRONG



BONI & LIVERIGHT  
PUBLISHERS NEW YORK

COPYRIGHT, 1923, BY  
BONI & LIVERIGHT

---

PRINTED IN THE U. S. A.

*First Printing, March, 1923*

*Second Printing, July, 1923*



## CONTENTS

### DUBLIN DAYS

|                                                  | PAGE |
|--------------------------------------------------|------|
| THE BREWER'S MAN . . . . .                       | 3    |
| A LAMENT . . . . .                               | 4    |
| AN OLD WOMAN OUTSIDE THE ABBEY THEATRE . . . . . | 5    |
| THE MADMAN . . . . .                             | 6    |
| THE BAIT DIGGER'S SON . . . . .                  | 7    |
| THE OLD MAN AT THE CROSSING . . . . .            | 9    |
| JEM . . . . .                                    | 10   |
| THE OLD MAN ADVISES HIS SON . . . . .            | 12   |
| OLD BRIDGET COMPLAINS TO THE LORD . . . . .      | 12   |
| THE FORTY-FOOT: RETROSPECT . . . . .             | 13   |
| FROST . . . . .                                  | 15   |
| RUFUS PRAYS . . . . .                            | 16   |

### THREE LITTLE SONGS

|                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| LOVER'S SONG . . . . .       | 21 |
| WASHERWOMAN'S SONG . . . . . | 22 |
| POET'S SONG . . . . .        | 23 |
| ZEKE . . . . .               | 24 |
| THE BIRD MAN . . . . .       | 25 |
| VERA VENUSTAS . . . . .      | 26 |

### EPITAPHY

|                                          |    |
|------------------------------------------|----|
| FROM THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY . . . . .       | 29 |
| A POET WHO OUTLIVED HIS GENIUS . . . . . | 30 |

|                                   | PAGE |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| A BABY . . . . .                  | 31   |
| A LOVELY LADY . . . . .           | 32   |
| OLD NAT NEVERSWEAT . . . . .      | 33   |
| ENA — MEENA — MINA — MO . . . . . | 34   |
| A NURSERY RHYME . . . . .         | 36   |
| CHRISTOPHER MARLYE . . . . .      | 37   |

## DALLINGTON RHYMES

|                                         |    |
|-----------------------------------------|----|
| DALLINGTON CHURCH . . . . .             | 41 |
| "FROM THE CHURCH TOWER" . . . . .       | 43 |
| DALLINGTON HILL . . . . .               | 44 |
| THE MADWOMAN OF PUNNET'S TOWN . . . . . | 46 |
| THE LOVERS . . . . .                    | 47 |

## FROM THE LOWERY ROAD

|                                                 |    |
|-------------------------------------------------|----|
| LOWERY COT . . . . .                            | 51 |
| MEAVY . . . . .                                 | 52 |
| THE OLD POSTMAN . . . . .                       | 53 |
| BUCKLAND BELLS . . . . .                        | 54 |
| NED . . . . .                                   | 55 |
| RUN, BOYS, RUN, THE BEGGAR MAN'S MAD! . . . . . | 56 |
| MICKY-THE-MOON . . . . .                        | 57 |
| THE KNOWLEDGEABLE CHILD . . . . .               | 58 |
| THE RETURN . . . . .                            | 59 |
| A MEMORY . . . . .                              | 60 |
| A BLESSING AND A CURSE . . . . .                | 61 |

# DUBLIN DAYS



# DUBLIN DAYS

*For T. W. Earp*

## I. THE BREWER'S MAN

**H**AVE I a wife? Bedam I have!  
But we was badly mated.  
I hit her a great clout one night,  
And now we're separated.

And mornin's going to me work  
I meets her on the quay:  
" Good mornin' to ye, ma'am! " says I:  
" To hell with ye! " says she.

## II. A LAMENT

I SEEN her last night  
And nothin' ailed her.  
She was singin': and now  
The breath has failed her.

Her hands I held,  
As cold as the clay:  
Her warm lips I kissed,  
Agape and gray.

A round black penny  
On each eye socket,  
And herself  
In God's pocket.



### III. AN OLD WOMAN, OUTSIDE THE ABBEY THEATRE

**I**N this Theatre they has plays  
On us, and high-up people comes  
And pays to sees things playin' here  
They'd run like hell from in the slums.

#### IV. THE MADMAN

I THINK I'll do a fearful deed  
Of wickedness and cruelty,  
And then, if Father Walsh speaks truth,  
Jesus will weep a tear for me:

And I will catch it in my hat  
Just here outside my cabin door,  
And put it on my little field  
Where nothing ever grew before.

And it will sprout so fine and brave,  
That lovely birds with yellow bills  
Will come to pluck my crowded corn  
From all the Seven Holy Hills.

## V. THE BAIT DIGGER'S SON

**A**YE, there's many a man does be drowned  
And carried a middlin' way:  
But never the like o' me brother  
Was floated from Dublin to Bray.

And him only two days in it.  
Sure, ye'd hardly believe it at all,  
But it's God's Truth. He went down fishin'  
One night on the North Wall.

What way was it? There's none knows rightly.  
He was there one turn of the light,  
And when next it came round he was no place,  
And no sign of him till next night.

When two men out o' Coliemore Harbour  
Pullin' back from the fishin' groun'  
Seen him floatin' by on his belly  
In the middle o' Dalkey Soun'.

But they didn't dare stop for to get him,  
For the boat was a powerful weight,

The night was dark, and the current  
Was runnin' the divil's own gait.

And he crossed the Bay o' Killiney,  
Till next day at twelve o' the clock  
They found him all swelled and puffy  
At Bray, in the slit of a rock.

Aye, there's many a man does be drowned  
And carried a middlin' way:  
But never the like o' me brother  
Was floated from Dublin to Bray.

## VI. THE OLD MAN AT THE CROSSING

**I** SWEEP the street and lift me hat  
As persons come and persons go,  
Me Lady and me gentleman:  
I lift me hat — but you don't know!

I've money by against I'm dead:  
A hearse and mourners there will be.  
And every sort of walking man  
Will stop to lift his hat to me!

## VII. JEM

**F**ITFULLY in the mornings worked  
The under gardener, James McCann,  
Ragged, red-eyed, red stubble chinned,  
A most unlikely sort of man.

They said he never swallowed food  
But porter was his only diet.  
He took good share of that, God knows,  
And yet, though surly, he was quiet.

He'd come round to the kitchen door  
Each afternoon, just short of two.

"Gi' me me twopence for me pint.

"Sure it's nearly time: ah, Bessie, do! "

"Now Jem, g' back: it's not your time.

"Go on, now, 'n' don't be lookin' sour."

So Jem would growl and clutter-clop  
Back to the tool-house till the hour.

I've heard them say, by dint of drink  
His gullet and his guts were black.

And he ran mad before he died  
And bit a woman in the back.

## VIII. THE OLD MAN ADVISES HIS SON

**S**HE'S the loveliest girl? Aye, maybe — by  
moonlight!

But ye'll do well not to trust the deceivin' moon.  
I was walking along the metals to Dalkey one  
night

When I seen on the groun' a shiny two-shillin'  
bit.

When I stooped for to grab it, what was it only a  
spit!

Ye'll do well not to trust the deceivin' moon.



IX. OLD BRIDGET COMPLAINS TO  
THE LORD

**M**ERCIFUL hour! God mend the pig,  
He'd lead the Archangel himself a jig.  
Eight chickens he's killed, and this makes nine,  
And ate my old nightshift off o' the line,  
And the brim of Darius's billycock hat.  
Go on, ye brute! Go on out of that!

That animal does whatever he plazes,  
He'll be staid by no one. O holy Jasus,  
'Twas yourself that put the divil in swine,  
So it's not for the likes of me to repine.  
Sure we all has our hardship and must go through  
it —

But, Jasus dear, oh, for why did Ye do it?

## X. THE FORTY-FOOT: RETROSPECT

**D**OCKRELL, Tallon, Target — then  
Were the days of mighty men!  
Holmes, M'Guinness, Fawcett, Chute  
An Eldorado of the brute  
Strength and grace of naked man:  
Sure I am that no one can  
Swim and dive the like of them.

“ Club handicap. A' ye ready, Jem? ”  
“ Get ready! Go! ” — splash — “ Wan! ” —  
    splash splat —  
(Jamesey M'Conkey's gone in flat!)  
“ Two! Three! ” and several splashes more  
And quite a little crop at “ Four! ”

George Holmes leaps in at thirty-eight —  
“ Jasus, but there's a goin' gait! ”  
And Dockrell starts the last of all,  
Dockrell, who with his foaming crawl  
Although there's men a length ahead,  
Will win, or else will finish dead.

“ He’s jerked.” “ Bedam, he’ll do it yet.”  
“ Glory to God, he has them bet! ”  
“ Up Dockrell! ” And the old rocks ring  
With praises of this glorious thing.

Well, that’s ten years ago and more  
And I am far from Kelly shore  
And Ring Rock: no one that I love  
Is left at all in Sandycove.  
House sold, meadow and orchard gone  
And garden too, to build upon.

Dockrell, Tallon, Target — where  
Are the men I worshipped there?  
Some still rub the pink flesh dry,  
Some have laid their towels by.  
Some go by the Round Tower still  
Some are passed to H<sup>^</sup>y Brasil,  
Where Fawcett, he that dived and died,  
Plunges in a fairer tide.

## FROST

UNNATURAL foliage pales the trees:  
Frost, in compassion of their death  
Has kissed them, and his icy breath  
Proclaims and silvers their election.  
Death, wert thou beautiful as these,  
We scarce would pray for resurrection.

## RUFUS PRAYS

**I**N the darkening church  
Where but a few had stayed  
At the Litany Desk  
The idiot knelt and prayed.

Rufus, stunted, uncouth,  
The one son of his mother.  
“Eh, I’d sooner ’ave Rufie,”  
She said, “than many another:

“’E’s useful about the ’ouse  
And so gentle as ’e can be.  
And ’e gets up early o’ mornin’s,  
And makes me a cup o’ tea.”

The formal evensong  
Had passed over his head  
He sucked his thumb and squinted  
And dreamed, instead.

Now while the organ boomed  
To the few who still were there,  
At the Litany Desk  
The idiot made his prayer:

“ Gawd bless Mother,  
    ’N’ make Rufie a good lad;  
Take Rufie to Heaven  
    ’N’ forgive him when e’s bad.

“ ’N’ early mornin’s in Heaven  
    ’E’ll make mother’s tea,  
’N’ a cup for the Lord Jesus  
    ’N’ a cup for Thee.”



# THREE LITTLE SONGS





## I. LOVER'S SONG

**T**HE AIR is hot, the sun is high,  
And all his fierce and garish light  
Beats on the stream, and makes the road  
A streak of dusky white.  
Beneath the bridge, where all is cool,  
The waters find relief from day;  
And are refreshed in that cool place,  
And rippling with an added grace  
Pass out upon their way.

The world is hard, its eyes burn bright,  
And in that hot and searching glare  
The gentlest words, the loveliest thoughts,  
Seem void of grace and bare.  
But in your mind, where all is pure,  
And all things wear a gentler hue,  
They come, and are renewed, until  
They are poured forth the lovelier still  
For having lodged with you.

## II. WASHERWOMAN'S SONG

CLOUDS, clouds, clouds in the sky,  
The Heavenly washing is hung out to dry!  
Billowing, bellying, full in the breeze,  
Leaping and tugging as gay as you please.  
Look, children, look at 'em! If they was mine,  
I'd be in dread that they'd blow off the line.

### III. POET'S SONG

**A**LL the exquisite cunning of hands,  
All the diamond wit of the wise,  
And the magical words that poets have dreamed,  
Fade away at a glance of the eyes.  
And the lips that Pheidias moulded are cold;  
Better the warmth of your lips and breath  
Than the loves of Propertius given to dust,  
Or Shelley strewing the road to death  
With pure and delicate lilies of song.  
O you have dumb'd the voice of the past!  
How shall I praise you? I look upon you,  
Mine eyes are filled and I hold you fast.

## ZEKE

**G**NARLY and bent and deaf's a pos'  
Pore ol' Ezekiel Purvis  
Goeth crippin' slowly up the 'ill  
To the Commoonion Survis.

And tappy tappy up the Haisle  
Goeth stick and brassy ferrule:  
And Passen 'ath to stoopy down  
An' 'olley in ees yerole.

## THE BIRD MAN

*For Eric Dickinson*

I DREAD the parrots of the summer sun,  
The harsh and blazing screams of July noon,  
A riot of jays and peacocks and macaws.  
There is some presage of his ardours due  
Even in the pale flamingoes of the dawn;  
While golden pheasants and hoopoes of the west  
Burn fierce and proudly still, when he has set.

Better the winter wagtails of pied skies,  
Cold ospreys of the north, cormorants of squall,  
Brown wrens of rain, white silent owls of snow,  
And bitterns of great clouds that in October  
Sweep from the west at evening. Lovelier still  
The night's black swans, the daws of starless night  
(Daw-like to hide what's shiny), plovers and gulls  
Of winds that cry on autumn afternoons.

These every one I love: but above these  
Rarest of all my birds, I dearly love  
The blue and silver herons of the moon.

## VERA VENUSTAS

### *Corporis*

Proud Eastern Queene,  
Borne forth in splendour to thy burial,  
What need of gems  
To deck thee? Bear the Tyrian gauds aside.  
Thine own dead loveliness outshines the pride  
Of diadems.

### *Animi*

O splendid hearte,  
Scorned and afflicted, still thou needest not  
Comfort of mee.  
What skills it that the body is uncouth  
Wherein thou dwell'st? Fear not, He seeth truthe  
Who gave it thee.

*(To be sunge as in a Doleful Dumpe by such as  
feare God.)*

# EPITAPHY





FROM THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY

**B**ILL JUPP lies 'ere, aged sixty year:  
From Tavistock 'e came.  
Single 'e bided, and 'e wished  
'Is father 'd done the same.

## A POET WHO OUTLIVED HIS GENIUS

**H**E caught a spirit of song within the mesh  
Of his fine wit. For thrice ten years it  
stayed,  
Then fled, and beckoned. He in aging flesh  
Some ten more lingered, and at last obeyed.

## A BABY

**T**WO days with puckered face of pain  
The second-housemaid's baby cried;  
And on the morning of the third  
Unclenched her little hands, and died.

## A LOVELY LADY

**F**ORBEAR, Sir Gallant, prating loud  
Of heart unwounded, head unbowed;  
Forbear, be humble, and draw near.  
For had you seen her who lies here  
You had not boasted nor gone proud.

## OLD NAT NEVERSWEAT

**S**OME threescore years ol' Nathan Blake  
Sat to the "Blue Boar" winder;  
Life gived 'n baccy and a pipe,  
But kep' the flint and tinder.

ENA — MEENA — MINA — MO

“ Ena — meena — mina — mo,  
Catch a nigger by 'is toe;  
If 'e 'olleys, let'n go.  
O — U — T spells ' out,'  
And out you must go.  
You'm of it O! ”

**C**HILDREN playing on the green:  
Joe Treguddick, deathly ill,  
Hears them very clearly still.

Silently, with blinking eyes  
Two great sons have dragged his bed  
To the window, till he dies.

Now he is wandering in the fields  
Where all things lose their certain shape:  
The cows in munching quiet lie  
And on the orange of the sky  
The trees stand out like scissored crape.

With deep cool breaths he drinks the night;  
Then in a sudden sweat of pain  
He twists upon his bed again.

The children's voices die away  
And seldom now the footsteps pass:  
A hobnailed tread upon the road  
Falls sudden silent on the grass.

Still with throb and throb of pain  
He hears the children at their play  
Chanting insistent in his brain.

Coughs: and with a whistling breath —  
Though he knows how the count will fall —  
Turns to play his game with death,  
Turns to the last game of all.

“ Ena — meena — mina — mo,  
Catch a nigger by 'is toe:  
If 'e 'olleys let'n go.  
O — U — T spells 'out,'  
And out you must go.  
You'm of it, Joe!”



## A NURSERY RHYME

CAN Can Can  
You make a can  
For us to gather cockles in,  
Tinker man?

Yuss Yuss Yuss,  
Blesher 'eart yuss.  
Which there's some 'd make it better,  
But there's some 'd make it wuss!

## CHRISTOPHER MARLYE

CHRISTOPHER MARLYE damned his God  
In many a blasphemous mighty line  
— Being given to words and wenches and wine.

He wrote his Faustus and laughed to see  
How everyone feared his devils but he.

Christopher Marlye passed the gate,  
Eager to stalk on the floor of Heaven,  
Outface his God, and affront the Seven:

But Peter genially let him in,  
Making no mention of all his sin.

And he got no credit for all he had done,  
Though he grabbed a hold on the coat of God  
And bellowed his infamies one by one,  
Blasphemy, lechery, thought and deed. . . .

But nobody paid him the slightest heed.

And the devils and torments he thought to brave  
He left behind on this side of the grave.

Heigh ho! for Christopher Marlye.



# DALLINGTON RHYMES

*(For Denys Buckley)*



## I. DALLINGTON CHURCH

CLOUDS all tumbled and white,  
Frowning clouds and gray:  
Dallington high on the hilltop,  
Dallington hears what they say.

“ O I have come from the Channel.”

“ And I from the westward hill  
Where Punnet’s Town blinks at the sunset  
Between a mill and a mill.”

“ I’ve showered on field and fallow  
Till I’m empty and dry,” says one.

“ I scowled at the people of Cross-in-Hand,  
And was driven away by the sun.”

“ And I have a hatful of hail.”

“ And I have a share of sleet: ”

“ So shall we go sailing to Battle  
And rattle it down on their street? ”

“ O I am primed for a fight,  
And if I can find one more

To challenge my path in the heaven  
There'll be rumbles and flashes galore."

Clouds all tumbled and white  
Frowning clouds and gray:  
Dallington high on the hilltop  
Dallington hears what they say.

## II. "FROM THE CHURCH TOWER"

**F**ROM the church tower  
For a mile around,  
Bells in the evening  
Shed a golden sound.

Little folks like maggots  
Climb the high hill  
In the rainy sunset  
To work God's will.



### III. DALLINGTON HILL

**M**ICHAELMAS night, Michaelmas night,  
And a dreamy hour and still.  
The fir-trees stand in a ragged row  
On the slope of Dallington Hill.

Michaelmas night and a misty night,  
And a cloud is across the moon,  
And the hillside waiting stiller than sleep  
For the thing which will happen soon.

Silver and clear the midnight chime  
Drops from the soft church bell;  
The fir-trees suddenly shiver and sway  
And break their year-old spell.

They climb the hill to the churchyard high  
And enter it one by one,  
And bow three times to the Father there,  
And bow down three times to the Son,

And three times more to the Holy Ghost:  
Then mutter and sigh in prayer.

The farmer's wife wakes up with a start  
And sees the hillside bare.

\* \* \* \* \*

The fir-trees stand in a ragged row,  
Still as the church they seem:  
And the farmer's wife has looked again  
And thinks she has dreamed a dream.

#### IV. THE MADWOMAN OF PUNNET'S TOWN

**A**SWELL within her billowed skirts  
Like a great ship with sails unfurled,  
The madwoman goes gallantly  
Upon the ridges of her world.

With eagle nose and wisps of gray  
She strides upon the westward hills,  
Swings her umbrella joyously  
And waves it to the waving mills.

Talking and chuckling as she goes  
Indifferent both to sun and rain,  
With all that merry company  
The singing children of her brain.

## THE LOVERS

**W**HEN the earth was born of morning  
And the stars stood watching by,  
You and I were clouds together  
Swimming in the frightened sky.

When the Son of God was dying  
Bitterly upon the tree,  
You and I were speckled plovers  
Waiting over Calvary.

When the earth is chill and withered  
And has run her period,  
We shall dance like motes in sunbeams,  
Dance on golden ways to God.



FROM "THE LOWERY ROAD"



## I. LOWERY COT

**T**HIS is the house where Jesse White  
Run staring in one misty night,  
And said he seed the Holy Ghost,  
Out to Lowery finger post.

Said It rose up like a cloud  
A-muttering to Itself out loud,  
And stood tremendous on the hill,  
While the world kept very still.

They put 'n shivering to bed,  
And in three days the man was dead.  
Gert solemn visions such as they  
Be overstrong for mortal clay



## II. MEAVY

**M**EAVY is in the valley, sleepy and old.  
The years lie light  
Upon St. Peter's brown church, by whose side,  
As if in spite  
Of Death, the old oak blossoms undecayed.

The hours pass very sweetly there: each full  
And quiet chime  
Flies off unheeded like a dove to seek  
The cotes of Time.  
Death comes so gently there, none are afraid.

### III. THE OLD POSTMAN

**H**ERE he sits who day by day  
Tramped his quiet life away;  
Knew a world but ten miles wide,  
Cared not what befell outside.

Nor, his tramping at an end,  
Has he need of book or friend.  
Peace and comfort he can find  
In the laneways of his mind.

#### IV. BUCKLAND BELLS

**B**UCKLAND bells, Buckland bells.  
Every note at evening tells  
Before the light be come again  
There will be rain: there will be rain.

As he puts his fowls to bed  
Farmer Hillson shakes his head  
To hear them chiming in the west.  
House is best: house is best.

Thick gray clouds are touching down  
On Hessary and Mis Tor crown.  
Come in and set the logs alight:  
There will be streams of rain tonight.

## NED

NED was my uncle's handy man,  
Old stubby Ned Magee.  
He wheeled me out in a bath chair  
The time I hurt my knee.

He waited till I was tucked in  
By Nora, my tall cousin,  
And ran me through the Dublin streets  
Nineteen to the dozen.

Head down he scuttled on the kerb  
As hard as he could go,  
Till we ran over at a turn  
A colonel's gouty toe.

"Where are you going, damn your eyes!"  
Curses came thick and fast:  
"The hill o' Howth, sir — hill o' Howth,"  
Said Ned, and scuttled past.

\* \* \* \* \*

And many a happy fishing day  
I had by old Ned's side,  
And Dublin seemed a lonely place  
The Thursday that he died.

RUN, BOYS, RUN, THE BEGGAR  
MAN'S MAD!

**D**ARK eagles from their scowling nest  
Curses swoop to my behest;  
And I curse most bitterly  
Each fat pursy man I see.  
You pass and leave my tale unheard,  
But wait, sirs, wait! for I've a word  
Will agonise ye, squeeze ye, twist  
Till the fibres of the wrist  
Burst like ragged bottle-straw  
Till rolling eye and rigid jaw  
Are witness to the agony  
That shakes your rich anatomy.  
Now, if you neglect me more,  
By Baal and Belzebub I've sworn  
To every beggar man I'll teach it  
And from our tearing throats we'll screech it  
Into every rich man's ear  
And howl him to a hell of fear,  
A hell of fear, a hell of fear,  
With scorching curses! So shall I  
Get one good laugh before I die.

## MICKY-THE-MOON

O HO, me little silver moon!  
They run me for a fool,  
But I've a wisdom in me head  
Will put them all to school.

I'll stick a bucket in the yard  
The time there's no one round,  
And when she's swimmin' grand and gay  
I'll crawl without a sound

And pop a sack tight over her,  
Then drain the water dry,  
And catch the little leppin' moon  
And stow her safely by.

I'll rub her brilliant face across  
Each copper coin that's mine,  
And every penny of them all  
Will get a florin shine.

Then up to Doyle's for floods o' drink  
To give them gullet's joy:  
"Come on," they'll say, "it's Micky's treat:  
Bedam, but Mick's the boy! "

## THE KNOWLEDGEABLE CHILD

**I** ALWAYS see, I don't know why,  
If any person's going to die.

That's why nobody talks to me.  
There was a man who came to tea

And when I saw that he would die  
I went to him and said, " Good-bye,

" I shall not see you any more."  
He died that evening. Then, next door,

They had a little girl: she died  
Nearly as quick, and Mummy cried

And cried, and ever since that day  
She's made me promise not to say.

But folks are still afraid of me,  
And, where they've children, nobody

Will let me next nor nigh to them  
For fear I'll say good-bye to them.

## THE RETURN

**N**OW Glory be to God, I'm drunk,  
My inwards filled with kindly beer,  
And start upon my homeward way  
Aglow with laughter and good cheer.

For this one night I'll take my oath  
In earth beneath or heaven above  
Or hell itself, you'd fail to find  
A creature that I cannot love.

From swelling heart and powerful throat  
I sing "The Memory of the Dead."  
My striding feet swing gallantly,  
The stars are candles to my head.



## A MEMORY

**W**HEN I was as high as that,  
I saw a poet in his hat.  
I think the poet must have smiled  
At such a solemn gazing child.

Now wasn't it a funny thing  
To get a sight of J. M. Synge,  
And notice nothing but his hat?  
Yet life is often queer like that.

## A BLESSING AND A CURSE

*(From the Irish)*

### 1. A Nurse Blesses a Child on His Fifth Birthday.

I wish you length of life,  
A white and lucky wife,  
O my darling Rory:

And after you are dead,  
May every hair of your head  
Be a tallow candle to light your soul to glory!

### 2. A Ferryman Curses His Fare.

That fat one there,  
As broad in the beam  
As any I've seen,  
She grudged his fare.

The ferryman cursed her  
Fair and square:  
I'm telling you, then,  
He cursed her well:

"May your ribs be the boat,  
And your two shin bones  
The oars to ferry your soul to hell!"









